

IAC-D-57/68
22 July 1957

Post-Mortem on NIE 11-57:

Sino-Soviet Bloc Air Defense Capabilities

Through Mid-1962,

dated 16 July 1957

1. This estimate supersedes NIE 11-5-55, dated 15 July 1955. The procedure employed in its preparation was similar to that used in NIE 11-5-55 and in NIE 11-5-57, "Soviet Capabilities and Probable Programs in the Guided Missile Field," dated 12 March 1957. This procedure included: (a) the use of ad hoc interagency committees in preparing contributions to the estimate; and (b) an examination of over-all Bloc air defense requirements to meet the probable Western air and missile threat during the next five years.

Findings

2. The committee method is cumbersome and time-consuming, but we believe it is probably desirable in production of an estimate such as this one, which examines a highly technical, complex subject and involves specialized contributions from all three military services and several IAC subcommittees. We found that some time could be saved by having the ad hoc committees identify areas in dispute but not attempt to finally resolve every contentious issue before passing their contributions to the Board. Nevertheless, six months is probably the minimum time that should be allotted to preparation of an estimate of this type.

3. We find that the study of Bloc requirements is essential, both to an estimate of future Soviet military programs where intelligence is lacking, and to an appreciation of Bloc strengths and weaknesses in the light of the mission to be accomplished. We consider that the systematic study of future Bloc requirements will become increasingly important as we move further into this period of rapidly changing weapons technology.

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Nevertheless, continuing efforts are required to further improve our knowledge on these subjects, and on the following additional key factors in Bloc air defense capabilities. Soviet fighter aircraft production and fighter armament; Bloc air defense communications, data-handling equipment, and system reaction times; and Soviet ECM and anti-ECM techniques. Deficiencies in intelligence on Soviet air defense guided missile systems have already been noted in the post-mortem on NIE 11-5-57.

5. In reviewing the intelligence gaps, we note particularly the lack of intelligence on future Soviet air defense policy and on trends in the balance between weapons systems.

Action

The appropriate IAC agencies and subcommittees are requested to continue their efforts to fill the intelligence gaps identified.